

RE: DRC2015-00108



David Wolff <dwolff@sageii.com>

Tue 11:58 AM

Emily Ewer <Emily@oasisassoc.com>; cmf_oasisassoc.com

Reply all

Hi,

Based on our field survey (albeit during the dry season) and review of numerous years of aerials in Google Earth there is no evidence of small "vernal pool" type ponded areas that would support fairy shrimp within the property. The rolling hill topography also is not conducive to small ponding basins. While most the aerials are dry season, there is a 3/2004 image where I could see ponding of small basins on other sites in the region I am familiar with. So the lack of suitable seasonal wetland/vernal pool wetland on the Redwings site is corroborated with the above review.

Give a call if you would like to discuss further. Thanks.

David K. Wolff, Principal Ecologist

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July 12, 2016

Carol Florence, AICP
Principal Planner, Oasis Associates
3427 Miguelito Court
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

SUBJECT: Assessment of Pole Barn San Joaquin Kit Fox Habitat Disturbance for the Redwings Horse Sanctuary, 6875 Union Road, Paso Robles, CA

Dear Carol:

Sage Institute, Inc. (SII) is providing this San Joaquin kit fox (SJKF) habitat disturbance assessment of the Redwings Horse Sanctuary pole barn and horse shade structures for your use in obtaining San Luis Obispo County project approvals. It is our understanding that the project is to provide pasture and shade structures for rescue horses. Our assessment assumes the pasture will be fenced with barbed wire or other fencing with a minimum six-inches of opening at the bottom of the fence for small wildlife passage. Other areas in the pasture will have moveable paddock fencing. The four-post, open-sided pole barn for hay storage and shade structures/"mare motels" (typically ag exempt buildings) are proposed to provide for storage and shade/shelter for the horses, respectively. These structures will be located near the existing barn. The pole barn and shade structures will contain no permanent flooring.

To provide this assessment, SII Principal Biologist Jason Kirschenstein conducted a site visit of the property on July 1, 2016. The purpose of the site visit was to evaluate the project site habitat conditions and regional context of the site as potential SJKF habitat.

The project site is rolling hilly topography supporting annual grassland, widely scattered oak trees, and coyote brush shrub lands. Approximately 10 acres in the middle of the property is an existing pistachio orchard. The surrounding lands are similar in topography, habitats and agricultural uses. The more intensive wine grape growing area is further to the north along the Highway 46 corridor.

The project site is within the recognized SJKF movement corridor between core populations and subpopulations. There have not been any SJKF sightings in this area for many years. The evaluation of SJKF issues for projects is really about maintaining the habitat and regional movement opportunities for the SJKF for the hopeful future reestablishment of the species should it expand back to this area from its core populations to the east.

The overall project would not result in any habitat disturbance and the pasture fencing with six inch space at the bottom would not represent a barrier to the free movement of small wildlife throughout the region. Placement of four poles in the ground for the pole barn would be a minimis ground disturbance that would not be a substantial effect on SJKF habitat. The small area of the pole barn with movable paddock fencing would not be a substantial impediment to the movement of wildlife though the area given the availability of surrounding lands onsite and offsite. As such, we would suggest there is

no effect on the SJKF or need for further SJKF evaluation and additional environmental review from a biological resources perspective.

Thank you very much for continuing with SII for your environmental consulting services. Please contact me directly if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Very truly yours,



David K. Wolff, Principal Ecologist

Attachment: Figure 1 – Representative Photographs